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ABSTRACT

The Admiral Corporation, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs (DCCA), the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), the area administrative entity for the Job Training Partnership Act (JPTA), and Carl Sandburg Community College (CSCC) recently joined in an effort to provide training and jobs for unemployed workers in Galesburg, Illinois. The following steps were components of the joint project: (1) the Admiral Corporation, which was planning an expansion of over 500 employees, was contacted by the Illinois DCCA with an offer of access to a number of economic development opportunities available from local, state, and federal sources; (2) CSCC participated in these discussions and arranged to coordinate the training grant application; (3) JPTA representatives worked with Admiral officials to establish training programs and negotiate costs; (4) funding was secured from JTPA and the local Job Service office; (5) CSCC applied for a High Impact Training grant to help underwrite the instructor cost being incurred by Admiral; and (6) 138 economically disadvantaged persons were hired and trained by Admiral. The cooperative effort illustrated the importance of: an attitude receptive to innovation and change that gives priority to business and industry needs; the value of creativity and innovation in program planning and delivery; networking (communication among agencies); quality control; and success. (AYC)

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ADMIRAL CORPORATION AND CARL SANDBURG COMMUNITY COLLEGE SCORE THROUGH JTPA

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INTRODUCTION

High inflation rates, low employment rates, and slow productivity growth rates have characterized the American economy for the past five years. In this period it has become evident that the State of Illinois must have closer cooperation between business and industry, education and government. As a case in point the Admiral Corporation, the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community affairs (DCCA), the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), the administrative entity for Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) Service Delivery Area (SDA) number 14 and Carl Sandburg College recently scored in a joint effort to provide unemployed workers with training and jobs in Galesburg, Illinois. Without joint effort and risk-taking, the endeavor would have failed. The success showed how a commitment on each participating organizations behalf contributed to the final success everyone enjoyed. The prize was initially a $93,057.00 economic development agreement and finally a new set of working relationships.

CASE STUDY (The Admiral Experience)

The events that made possible the forging of the Admiral contract with Carl Sandburg College identified in pre-requisite order include:

1. Admiral Corporation, planning an expansion of over 500 employees, was contacted by a marketing team representing the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs to offer the expanding company access to a number of economic

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development opportunities now available from local, state and federal sources.

2. Carl Sandburg College representatives participated in these discussions and arranged to coordinate the training grant application. Members of the JTPA staff worked with Admiral officials to establish training programs and negotiate training costs. Coupled with local JTPA on-the-job training funds was the targeted jobs tax credit program certified through the local Job Service office.

3. During the time that applicants were being determined eligible through JTPA, the Carl Sandburg College "CENTER FOR AGRICULTURE, BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY" applied for a High Impact Training (HITS) grant through the Illinois Department of Adult/Vocational and Technical Education (DAVTE), to help underwrite the instructor cost being incurred by Admiral. Funds in this area were depleted at the state level and the community college was referred to the (ISBE) economic development program funded through 8% JTPA funds for assistance.

4. Through funding of this project 138 economically disadvantaged persons were hired and trained by Admiral.

WHAT WE LEARNED

Carl Sandburg College has become an effective catalyst in the economic development of West Central Illinois with a growing reputation for impartial decision making and support relative to the geographic service area representative of college district 518. Through trial and error a new partnershp was forged which became an effective delivery system enabling the comunity college to impact the economic development of the region.

MINDSET

A "MINDSET" or an attitude receptive to innovation and change that considers the needs of business and industry is of primary importance. Decision makers from the Governors office to state and local elected officials and designated

administrators must project an attitude that allows for flexibility for developing the tools that will train the work place of the future. Illinois Governor James Thompson has been instrumental in providing the "Mind Set" thai has impacted agencies at the state level. In West Central Illinois, Cari Sandbug College has been instrumental in providing the "Mind Set" that has impacted agencies at the grass roots level. "This was the first time for the Admiral Corporation to get involved in a state or federally supported training pogram. If this is an example of what can be done together I am certain there will be much more of it in the future" (David Beversdorf, Manager/Manpower Planing and Development-Admiral Corporation).

The making of a "Mind Set" is a difficult charge, especially in an area that is economically depressed. The willingness to risk success in an arena that is unprecedented can generate opposition that traditional organizational leaders may elect to avoid. "It often seems to be more risky to address the future tha it is to invest in the past" (Joseph Coates). However, without this critical ingredient called mind set the likelihood for success is minimal at best.

INNOVATION

Creativity in directing organizations into a changing marketplace; a willingness to entertain new concepts and modes of instruction in a systematic format; the professionalism to extract non-productive methodologies and the ability to accept constructive criticism are attributes that generate an environmnt conducive to innovative leadership functioning in the world of business and industry, education and government in the 80's and 90's.

It is well known that by the mid 1990's approximately two thirds of all 18 year olds will be needed in the military in order to maintain 1983 standards, two thirds of the nations 18 year olds will be needed in business and industry to maintain 1983 standards, and two thirds of the 18 year olds will be needed in the nations colleges and universities to maintain 1983 standards. Coupled with the challenges from abroad to the revitalization of American Industry, it becomes

evident that business as usual will be severely impacted by these factors, and that vocational education will require innovative leadership in addressing immediate and long range occuaptional needs of the United States.

NETWORKING

A Special relationship between the community college and economic development agencies and business and industry is crucial to the success of a well planned project. "The fact that the community college is supervising the contract projects a positive attitude...there has always been a good relationship between Admiral Corporation and Carl Sandburg College" (David Beversdorf, Manager/Manpower Planning and Development-Admiral Corporation). "There has been no time that we have called the community college without immediate response...it is a hand-in-hand relationship" (Nick Oriti, Director/Human Resources-Admiral Corporation)

Networking is a time consuming and compromising process that is mandatory for the success of an economic development delivery system. Agencies must develop a mode of communication that is workable in a given geographic area; workable in that all agencies have negotiated, recognized and/or eliminated traditional ideals of turfdom, and countered ill founded jealousies prevalent in many regions of the U.S.A. today. Carl Sandburg College has worked deligently in West Central Illinois to identify areas of strength with which to develop linkages between agencies that share a common cause for economic development.

Carl Sandburg College has always grounded its proposals and pojects in the expertise of the advisory council structure. Carl Sandburg College has tried to be a good listener unafraid to gamble and willing to share responsibilities, successes, and failures with the various economic development agencies representing West Central Illinois.

QUALITY CONTROL

"With all the talk about how wonderful and important public/private partnerships are, people would be shocked to know that most relationships between schools and businesses do not work" (Gale

Jasso). The responsibilities rest with both public and private sectors. Under a fully collaborative arrangement, business and industry would not just advise and assist; they would join in providing training, in sharing authority for what is done, and in holding equal responsibility for the outcomes" (Jerome Moss). An effective trained work force is the factor that stimulates cooperation and positive attitudes between the public and private sectors. Better trained employees, building a better product at a lower cost, provide the private sector with the rationale for joint ventures; state-of-the-art instructors, utilizing state-of-the-art equipment, provide the public sector with the rationale for joint ventures.

WINNING

"Winning plays a major role in the success of school/business relationships. If all players win, the relationship will work and may even blossom into that lofty dream called a "Partnership". If the players only look out for themselves, then either a near miss or a direct hit will result and everyone wil lose" (Gale Jasso). The Admiral Corporation project evolved as a success story for all participants, resulting in a true partnership that has to date stimulated an additional pilot project between the community college and the industry, with another proposal in the making. Winning is important in the establishment of a track record; the establishment of an agency grounded in contract procurement and grantsmanship.

CONCLUSIONS

"There is a widely held belief that it is often a waste of time to become involved with governmentally funded vocational education programs because they are the captive of the bureaucracies that operate them" (Howell and Frankel). This barrier must be eliminated if vocational education is to enjoy the status as an effective occupational training entity in the information age of the 80's and 90's as it was in the industrial revolution of the 40's and 50's.

The Admiral Corporation experience is an example of the new partnership concept in Illinois

where local agencies work together to provide the maximum number of options for private business with as little red tape as possible. Governor Thompson is using the community college as the local economic development resource for the future in the development of centers for business and industry and by making grants available through the community college board and the state board of education.

JTPA is the basis for the changing attitude in government toward the private employer. Although this program is government sponsored it is employer directed by the requirement of a more than 50% participation by private business on the Private Industry Council (PIC), the governing board for local programs. JTPA can provide a key role in changing the attitude of industry toward public/private sector collaborations. "JTPA offers the private sector unprecidented latitude in exercising influence over local job training activities" (Richard Clinton).

The move of programs to the local level or the "New Federalism" gives the community college the prime opportunity to emerge as the new leadership for quality training as long as "Education" acknowledges the needs of business are not necessarily the needs of education and the community college is willing to address the realistic needs of business.

When efforts by all participants culminate in a successful project, everyone has a sense of pride in a "Job Well Done". In this case however, the project with Admiral Corporation was more than just a "Job Well Done". It is the sign of things to come, starting with the "New Partnership" between industry and government and ending in a direction yet to be realized. One thing is certain, the community college has the edge in becoming the catalyst that can bring such elements together to address the needs of a changing economy.

The foundation has been set in place by a mission to educate and train the labor force; here is the opportunity to build on that foundation by offering to private business and industry a variety of options with the high cost of training being underwritten by state and federal agencies.

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